

## **A Message to the Community from Local Medical Providers**

### **regarding H1N1 vaccinations:**

Clinical trials conducted by the National Institutes of Health and the vaccine manufacturers have shown that the new H1N1 vaccine is both safe and effective. The FDA has licensed it. There have been no safety shortcuts.

It is produced exactly the same way the seasonal flu vaccine is produced every year. It is simply a new virus strain. In fact, had H1N1 struck this country earlier than this spring, the H1N1 strain probably would have been included as part of this year's seasonal flu shot.

Millions of Americans get the seasonal flu vaccine each year without any problems. Still, understanding that some Americans have concerns about "new" vaccines, the National Institutes of Health and the vaccine manufacturers have conducted more rigorous tests on the H1N1 vaccine than they do on other flu vaccines, and there have been no red flags from these clinical trials.

Also, CDC has stepped up surveillance efforts to track the H1N1 vaccine and any possible adverse events. Since it is so closely related to the seasonal flu vaccine, we do not expect to see serious side effects. But we are taking all the necessary steps to promote and monitor safety.

The world's top doctors and scientists believe the risk of H1N1 flu, especially for pregnant women, children, and people with underlying health conditions, is higher than any risk that might come from the H1N1 vaccine.

The evidence overwhelmingly supports flu vaccines, including the H1N1 vaccine, as much safer than getting the flu. Individual special circumstances should be considered by your medical provider, but as a general rule, if you are in a population group recommended to get the H1N1 vaccine, our advice is to be immunized.

Even if you've had flu-like illness since the emergence of the H1N1 strain, unless you've had a laboratory culture confirming H1N1 flu (not the rapid flu test,) it is recommended that you get H1N1 flu vaccine if you're in a priority group as listed by the CDC.

Priority groups vary according to type and availability of H1N1 vaccine. Check the health department's announcement of what vaccine is available, for whom, and when, at [www.rileycountyks.gov](http://www.rileycountyks.gov) or by calling 776-4779, extension 297.

Signed,

Riley County-Manhattan Health Department

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